

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7939

INFO AMCONSUL CALI

AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 3142

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CO CI

SUBJ: ATTITUDES TOWARD CHILEAN REGIME

1. THE COLOMBIAN LEFT HAS CONTINUED ITS PUBLIC DENOUNCEMENTS OF THE CURRENT MILITARY REGIME IN CHILE. IN RECENT DAYS, SENSATIONALIST TABLOID EL BOGOTANO (LEFT OF CENTER LIBERAL) HAS RUN A SERIES OF ARTICLES DESCRIBING ALLEGED TORTURE PRACTICES USED BY THE CHILEAN AUTHORITIES. THE DATA USED BY THE NEWSPAPER HAD BEEN DRAWN FROM A SERIES OF TAPE RECORDINGS THAT SENATOR APOLINAR DIAZ (LIBERAL) HAD BROUGHT BACK FROM THE RECENT TRIBUNAL ON CHILE HELD IN MEXICO.

2. DIAZ, WHO DESCRIBES HIMSELF AS BEING IN THE LEFT WING OF THE LIBERAL PARTY, STATED THAT THE COLOMBIAN OPPOSITION TO THE CHILEAN REGIME WAS DRAWN FROM A WIDE PORTION OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM, RUNNING ROUGHLY FROM RIGHT OF CENTER TO THE FAR LEFT. HE DESCRIBED THE MEXICO MEETING AS ALSO HAVING A BROAD BASE OF SUPPORT, WITH DIVERSE GROPS FROM A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES INCLUDING SEVERAL FROM THE US IN ATTENDANCE. DIAZ PARTICULARLY NOTED THE PARTICIPATION OF REPRESENTATIVE MICHEAL HARRINGTON (DEMOCRAT, SIXTH MASSACHUSETTS DISTRICT) AT THE TRIBUNAL.

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3. DIAZ SAID THAT CRITICISM OF THE JUNTA WOULD CONTINUE,

BOTH IN COLOMBIA AND IN OTHER PARTS OF THE HEMISPHERE. HE SAID THAT A LARGE MEETING WOULD BE HELD IN CANADA AT THE END OF THIS YEAR.

4. DIAZ ATTRIBUTED THE WIDESPREAD COLOMBIAN DISTASTE FOR THE CHILEAN REGIME TO THE FACT THAT THE GENERALS HAD OVERTHROWN AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT, IN CONTRAST, FOR EXAMPLE, TO BRAZIL WHERE THE MILITARY HAD REPLACED A REGIME OF QUESTIONABLE POPULAR ORIGIN. HE ALSO SAID THAT CULTURAL DIFFERENCES TENDED TO MAKE THE BRAZILIAN REGIME OF LESS DIRECT CONCERN TO THE COLOMBIAN PUBLIC.
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